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7.
THE
CONVOCAATION
ANATOMIZED.

Being a Brief
EXAMINATION
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS

Against the
Ld. Bp. of *BANGOR*'s Writings :
BY THE
Lower House of CONVOCAATION.

L O N D O N :

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Where may be had an Answer to the Cavils of *Dr.*
Snape, relating to the Bp. of *Bangor*. Fr. 6 d.

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T H E
CONVOCA TION
Anatomized, &c.

***** F all the *Church-Comedies*
 O which we have of late
 been Entertain'd with,
 I know none so com-
 pletly qualified to give
 the whole Kingdom Diversion as this
 have before me: Some Jests go but
 a little way and exhaust themselves
 of all their Mirth; but this, as it is
 perfectly dispos'd to make the People
 Concern'd Compleatly Ridiculous, so
 the Jest will scarce ever be worn out
 by the Repetition.

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Nor do I make any Question but the *Gentlemen* themselves have their share of the Laughter, tho' they are the Subjects of it; for it is not the worst part of some mistakes in the World, that they work the first Convictions upon the Authors of them.

That the Bishop of *Bangor's* Sermon would give Offence to the Lower House of Convocation no Man could doubt; nor could the Bishop *good Gentleman* doubt, but he should incur their Displeasure, and this of the worst and warmest Kind, because it has touch'd them in the tender part, *viz.* that of their *Ecclesiastick Tyranny*; and therefore it can be no surprise to his Lordship, or to any one else, to find the Lower House, how Calm *so ever*, in their other Proceedings, how Grave *so ever* the Fathers, how Mild *so ever* their Resentment of other Injuries, arm themselves with *Heat* and *Flame* in this Quarrel.

But the jest does not lye there, for had the *Defended* themselves as Persons Attack'd, all the World would have

have justified them, as acting the Great first Principle of Nature, *Self-Defence*, and all Men would have blam'd the Bishop for falling upon the Reverend Body, he himself being a Member : But when we find them taking up the Cudgels *in Nomine Domini*, and bringing in the whole Church of Christ into the Quarrel, when they pretend to espouse Religion in general, and to be anxious for the well Ordering and good Government of the House of God, and that they Cry out only because the Church of Christ is divested of her Rights and other just Authority ; This is such a Jest, when the Persons and their former Conduct is considered, as will extort Smiles from the most mortified Countenance in the World.

The Bishop of *Bangor's* Sermon tends to Disarming the Ecclesiasticks of all their Usurp'd Authority, taking from them that pretended Right of Opposing their Flocks, and Tyrannizing over the Consciences of their People, which our Blessed Saviour never gave them any Title to, and

which nevertheless they have Drawn the World into the approbation of; *I say*, that the Bishop's Sermon has a direct and happy Tendency to this, none can contend: But that therefore the whole Church should embark in this Quarrel, and taking the Alarm, should tell the World, the Bishop has rais'd War against her Constitution, and her very Existence; this is a meer piece of Priest-Craft, and is so naked and uncover'd an Intrigue, that must certainly expose them to the Satyrical part of Mankind in an uncommon manner. *For Example,*

Is it not very Instructing in it self to observe, That these Reverend People should shew such an Extraordinary Concern when the AUTHORITY of the Church only seem'd to be Attack'd, who had so many Ages suffer'd the DOCTRINE of the Church to be attack'd and even Trampled under Foot, without any extraordinary Motion? That they should take Fire and raise the Alarm at the least Touch in this most sensible Part, *viz.*
of

of their Power and Dominion, when they have been *ſo* Gentle, *ſo* Tame, *ſo* Quiet and Undiſturb'd at the open Affaults that have been made upon the very Vitals of the Chriſtian Religion? This has ſomewhat in it to make the World rather Merry with them, than Serious.

How often have Complaints come before them of the Growth of Atheiſm and Infidelity! of the Height to which theſe Nations are come in all manner of Profaneneſs and Immorality! of the open and avowed attacks upon the Divinity of our Bleſſed Redeemer! upon the Exiſtence of the Glorious Trinity! upon the Nature and Being of a God, and upon other the moſt Eſſential Parts of the Chriſtian Faith! How have they been frequently moved in the Cauſe of their Lord and Maſter JESUS CHRIST, to ſhew their Abhorrence of the Blaſphemous Notions, and deteſtable Opinions publiſhed by *Collins*, *Aſgill*, *Coward*, and other Hereticks, who have made Religion their ſport, and endeavour'd to De-
bauch

bauch the World with their *Free-
 thinking*, their *Deism*, *Atheism*, and
 other profane Notions of Divers
 Kinds? And in all these Cases, how
 Sober have been the Methods? how
 Maturely, *the soft Word for slowly*,
 have they considered them? how
 Backward and Dilatory have been
 their Proceedings? And when they
 have at last ripen'd up their most De-
 liberate Deliberations into some form;
 how have they bandied them about
 in their Lower House till they have
 lost them! How have they let Tri-
 fling or Factionous Party Disputes in-
 terrupt and embarras the Grand De-
 bate, till at last they have let the
 Cause of God drop through their
 Fingers, and wither or fail in their
 Hands, for want of a Zeal suited to
 the Occasion? or, *that in Words pro-
 per to the Case*, for want of the *same
 Warmth* with which they are now
 animated upon the first apprehen-
 sions of an Invasion of their Hierar-
 chy, or a weakning their Ecclesiastick
 Immunities, and those Apprehen-
 sions groundless too! As if the Cause
 of God was not so much concern'd
 in

in the propagation of true Religion, or in the preserving the Knowledge of, and Reverence of *the Deity* in the World, as it was in keeping up the Honour, Dignity, and Usurped Jurisdiction of the Clergy : By which universal Indolence of the Reverend Body (the Lower House) in the Great Work of preserving the Interest of Religion in the Nation, they have discover'd such a Temper, as may give us just Cause to put them in mind of that terrible Commination pronounced in Scripture, and which we wish they may have no share in, *Jer. 48. 10. Cursed be he that doth the Work of the Lord (Negligently) Deceitfully.*

That this Discourse may not seem Sarcastick, and above all, that it may not seem Unjust, I shall refer back to the Proceedings of this Venerable Body in the Case of their Grand Representation to the late Queen in the Year 1711. The Work became them well, it was worthy their Character, not at all below them as a Synodical, Convocated, National Meeting of
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Divines ; for it was, *A Representation of the State of Religion* to the Sovereign, in order to obtain a redress of the Churches Grievances, and a reformation of the Nation's Vices: The Title express'd, that it regarded the late Excessive Growth of Infidelity, Heresy, and Profaneness in this Nation ; and the Convocation had made an Excellent Recapitulation of the Particulars, of which I shall have occasion to make some mention again.

In the Debating this Momentous Affair between the Upper and Lower House, they Differ'd about some little matters in the Form of the Representation, and about incerting, or not incerting, a Clause about Civil Affairs ; and indeed about the Party Quarrels of the Day, which God knows, *in their utmost weight*, were Trifles to the great Affair of Religion, which was the Substance of the thing then upon their Hands.

In those Debates, however slow and soft they were before, they grew
so

so stiff, so refractory and sour to one another, and so positive in their Punctillio's, one side *amending*, and the other *adhering*, that they chose rather to let the whole Work drop, and the Cause of Religion sink in their Hands, as above, rather than yield to one another in one Point ; so the Representation was *laid by* and *never presented*, and the Convocation rose, *says a certain Author*, with the Scandal of having done Nothing, tho' in a Matter of such great Importance.

These are the same Sons of the Church of *England*, who can so eminently rouse themselves from that Lethargy, upon the Occasion of the Bishop of *Bangor's Sermon and Book* ; so eminently more concern'd are they for the Interest of the Churches Judicature, and the Authority of the Clergy, than they have appeared to be in the Interest of Religion, and the Reformation of the whole Kingdom.

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And that we may see of what Moment the Affair was, which they were then so happily engaged in, and of how much more Importance it was than can be pretended in the present Dispute, I shall give a View of the Grievances which they then had to Complain of, and seek Redress for, and then we shall see, whether in human Reasoning it might not be expected, that they had other Business to do than what they have been now a doing.

The Mischiefs attending the Church at that time are set down in most moving Expressions by the Convocation themselves; and when we read the following Quotation from them, it will be wonder'd at by all the World, *if not laugh'd at*, that a Convocation of Divines of the Church of *England*, knowing that those Evils are still Unredress'd, and Encreas'd, rather than Diminish'd, by the Neglect of so many Years; should now so eminently disturb themselves with, and so suddenly take Fire at this Matter in Dispute
with

with the Bishop of *Bangor*, leaving the Authors of the *Errors* and *Heresies*, which they mention'd, at full Liberty to sap the Foundations of the Church, and extirpate, as much as in them lies, all Sence of Religion from among us: Let us see then in what Condition the Church of *England* stood in the Year 1711. as it was laid down by the Convocation it self; I shall take their own Words:

1. They say, a Deluge of Impiety and Licentiousness, has broke in upon us, and over-spread this Church and Kingdom.

2. That all Endeavours used by publick or private Persons to stop the Growth of it have proved ineffectual; and in the mean time, Infidelity hath taken deep Root, and hath spread its Branches wide, and shot up to an amazing Height, &c.

3. That the Disputes with Papists being ended, other Adversaries rose up, who openly Attack'd the Fundamental

damental Articles of our Faith, and scattered the Poison of *Arianism* and *Socinianism* thro' the Kingdom.

4. The Doctrine of a *Trinity of Persons* in the *Unity of the Godhead* was then denied and scoffed at; the Satisfaction made for the Sins of Mankind by the precious Blood of Christ, was renounced and exploded; the ancient Creeds of the Church were represented as unwarrantable Impositions, and treated with Terms of the utmost Contumely and Reproach.

5. They at last proceeded so far, as even to set up a Religious Assembly, where Divine Worship was publicly performed, in a way agreeable to the Principles of the *Unitarians*, and Weekly Sermons were preached in Defence of them.

6. A Book hath been Printed, wherein the *Arian* Doctrine is avowed and maintained; and a Promise is made of evincing the Truth of it, by large and elaborate Proofs in other Treatises

Treatises from the same Hand, which are soon to follow.

7. For the Books written in an Argumentative Way, against the Divinity of our blessed Lord, did in a little Time produce others of a worse Spirit and Tendency; wherein the Doctrines by him revealed, were spoken of with profane Levity and Contempt; his Humiliation and Sufferings were derided; his Person was blasphemed and treated with as great Indignity and Scorn, as when he stood at the Judgment Seat of *Pilate*.

8. The Godhead of the Holy Spirit being first denied, all the Supernatural Operations on the Hearts of Men were afterwards question'd, and the Grace of God ridicul'd; all Mysteries in Religion were exploded, as absurd and useless Speculations, as implying Contradictions and meaning nothing, and therefore as incapable of becoming Objects of assent to reasonable Minds.

9. The Scheme of Morality proposed by the Gospel was undervalued,
and

and said not to be beyond the Reach of Human Invention; the *Mosaick Account* of the Creation, was represented as mere Allegory and Fable; the natural Immortality of the Soul was opposed as a Vulgar and Groundless Error; the Inspiration of the Holy Writ was so explained, as amounted to a Denial of it. The Authority of the present Canon of Scripture, hath been represented as standing upon a very precarious Foundation; the Spuriouſness of ſeveral Paſſages, and ſome Books of it, was more than inſinuated. Priests without Diſtinction were traduced as Impoſers on the Credulity of Mankind; villified and inſulted as the Filth and Off-ſcowering of all Things; and thoſe Religious Ordinances which they were appointed to diſpenſe, even the chief of them, *Baptiſm* and the *Supper of the Lord*, were ſpoken of with ſuch a Degree of ungodly Mockery and Insolent Scorn, as fill'd the Hearts of good Chriſtians with Horror and Aſtoniſhment; nay, *Religion it ſelf*, was, in ſome of their looſe Writings, ſo deſcrib'd, as if it were
nothing

nothing but a melancholly Frenzy,
and pious Enthusiasm.

10. The Grounds of believing the Gospel in this Age, have been represented as less firm and certain, by a pretended Calculation of Degrees, according to which, the Credibility of the Traditional Facts related in Scripture, must every Age decrease. The Necessity of all Human Thoughts and Actions, as being mere Modes of Motion, and the Results of pure Mechanism, hath been asserted; an Assertion which overturns the Foundation of all Religion, whether Natural or Instituted, and renders all Notions of Good and Evil, of Reward and Punishment, whether in this Life or the next, Groundless and Vain.

11. The frequency of Oaths and Imprecations, the manifest Growth of Immorality and Profaneness, have not been effectually restrain'd by them.

12. Sel.

12. Seldom hath greater Vigilance been used by the Civil Magistrates to secure a Religious Observance of the *Lords-Day*, nor hath it among the meaner Sort proved unsuccessful ; however it hath not banish'd Excess and Luxury at such times from the Tables of the Great, nor hinder'd them from wasting those sacred Hours in *Play* and vain Amusements.

13. The Excesses of Gaming have never been more general and flagrant ; Conscience hath never been more openly prostituted to Interest, without any regard to Censure.

These, and very many more, were the Religious Grievances of the Church at that time, and which were intended to be insisted on in a serious Representation to the Queen : But all their Concern for them, would not prevail among them to lay down their little private Animosities, their Dogmatick Adherence to trifling Punctilioes, not yielding in the least Point to one another ; but rather letting the Honour of God, and the
Interest

Interest of his Church suffer, than for their Sakes to stoop to one another, and that without any *Grief of Heart* to them, they dropt their Representation, as is already said, to the eternal Infamy of the Persons who did so, and indeed to the Reproach of the whole Body.

Any one that was now to read *the Grief of Heart* with which the same Gentlemen took into Consideration the Bishop of *Bangor's* Sermon, would promise himself, that all these Dreadful Things which they complain'd of as above, were rectified and redress'd; otherwise, they would be apt to say, the Convocation could never spare themselves or their Time for such Things as these.

That any of those Grievances are not redress'd, is but too manifest; and that the Convocation has not since given themselves any Concern or Trouble about them is as evident; by which, whether the Lower House be composed of the same individual Members or no, they entitle themselves

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selves to the same Blame. But as soon as the Bishop of *Bangor* has but touch'd their *Diana*, their Idol of Ecclesiastick Power, then they appear with *Grief of Heart, &c.* to attack him, and proceed with all the Vigour and Unanimity imaginable. It is particular also to observe here, how when their Representation against Atheism and Infidelity came into Consideration, they were so much divided, and so difficult, that they could by no Means come to any regular Method of Agreement about it; but as soon as their Power is Attack'd, they Vote their own Vindication *Nemine Contradicente*; of so much greater Importance to them are their Privileges than their Principles!

It would take up too much of my Time here, to give Instances from History of the Indolence of our Protestant Ecclesiasticks in the Case of Religion, or to enquire into any of the former Measures for redressing the Grievances of the Church; besides it would endanger my being exposed to the Indignation of the
Lower

Lower House another Way, *viz.* that being obliged to say, that Vice and Immorality, Error and Infidelity, are Crimes and Offences best kept under and suppress'd, by the good Living and Example of the Clergy on one Hand, and by strong Arguments, laborious Preachings, and constant Exhortations of the Clergy, on the other Hand, working and labouring to instruct and inform their People; to perswade Men in Season and out of Season, by Word and Doctrine, rather than by coercive Violence and the Power of Magistracy; much more is it, rather so done, than by Usurping such a Power and Authority as Jesus Christ never gave to them, or intended for them, and consequently never has blest them in the Use of, and I firmly believe never will; for it may be observed, and is worth observing, That Persecution and Penal Laws, have never been blest'd with Success to the Church of *England*, in any one Instance they can give in History since the Reformation: On the contrary, History is full of Instances, and some of re-

cent Memory, when the exerting the usurped Power in the Church, and embarking the Civil Power in Aid of Ecclesiastick Prosecutions, have *over-turned both*, and brought the Church and State also, into more Danger than any other Thing whatever.

Witness the late Civil Confusions in *England* and *Scotland*, which we all know began in Persecution, ended in a furious Rebellion, and at last in the Destruction, for a Time, of the Monarchy it self, as well as of the Prince who was first drawn into that Church Snare by the Clergy.

The like Example we have in the latter end of the Reign of King *Charles II.* and of King *James II.* in *Scotland*, where the bloody Persecution of the *Western* People there in behalf of Episcopacy, has been the Cause of the utter Extirpation, or at least, Suppression of Episcopacy out of that Country; God himself so visibly punishing the horrid Usurpation of his Authority thereby :
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The Clergy, who carried on their Church Power to Blood and Murder, embarking the Civil Magistrates with them to such a degree, that King *Charles II* told the Archbishop, *He would make a Butcher of him rather than a King*, and that he *would have no more Blood shed in Scotland on Account of Religion*. I say, God himself punished this Usurpation of Power, by delivering the Persecutors into the Hands of the Persecuted, and making the very Men who were doom'd to Death by their bloody Council, and Sanguinary Edicts, the first Instruments to the Revolution.

These Examples I bring to Evidence what ill Success these Usurpations of Christ's Authority, and Invasions of his Kingship in his Church, have always met with; how evident it is that God has not bless'd them, and how likely it is that he never will.

I might also, with great Advantage, enter here into an Examination
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tion of Circumstances, and give a State of the true Ends and Views upon which the Clergy have always acted in their assuming the reserv'd Authority of their Lord and Master, and in the unjust Exercise of it upon the Subjects of his Kingdom, wherein it would appear, that however his Kingdom is declared not to be of this World, their Designs have manifestly been Worldly, and that they have even openly and barefacedly pointed at this Corrupt End only, *viz.* the obtaining Dominion and Power, to Lord it over God's Heretage, and to Trample upon, and Tear the Flock they are appointed to Feed.

But this Enquiry has too much Satyr in it, and must lead me out of Necessity to exposing the Mistakes of those, whose Follies I rather desire to prevent, and at least to conceal, if they would but make it possible to do so.

Waving therefore that Particular, I come to the Thing it self, the Report of the Convocation against the Bishop;

Bishop ; and who can avoid noticing how it begins with a Jest, in the very Introduction, *viz.* That it is *with Grief of Heart that they have observed* what they now represent ; this we are by the Rules of Decency to believe, because attested by so many Reverend Persons, whose Station in the Church, places them high in our Esteem, as to their Veracity: But it remains a Doubt about what this their *Grief of Heart* is here to be understood, to be exercised, the subsequent Words, which are the Relative to this Antecedent, leaving it somewhat doubtful: The Words are these, *That the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Bangor hath given Great and Grievous Offence ;* whether now the *Grief of Heart*, which the Reverend Fathers have conceived, is occasion'd by the *Latter part*, *viz.* That Great and Grievous Offence is given, or by the *Former part*, *viz.* That the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Bangor has given it ; this I say is left doubtful, and the rather, because it is suggested by some, that many of
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thers have said the like, or very much worse Things than these which the Bishop of *Bangor* has said; and yet the Reverend Members of the Convocation have not taken Offence thereat, nor has it been any *Grief of Heart* to them; this makes their *Grief of Heart* be something both of a Jest and of a Riddle at the same time: The Jest, it is acknowledg'd, is not so well natur'd indeed as it should be, for who can doubt but it must Grieve them, when a Right Reverend Prelate of their own Church has undertaken to strip them of the unjust Usurpations of Christ's Power in his Church, which they have so long exercised, and the Sweet of which is too agreeable to them to part willingly from? On this Account we may very well, *I say*, allow, that it is with *much Grief of Heart* that they read the Doctrines and Positions published by the Lord Bishop of *Bangor*.

And indeed had not this been the Case, it would have been something scandalous to think that these
Doctrines

Doctrines and Positions which touch only themselves, or themselves principally, should be such a *Grief of Heart* to them, who have not shewn the least Affliction or Concern, much less any such testimony of Grief at the amazing height to which the Growth of Impiety and Infidelity, and all the wickedness represented above, and which are still encreasing upon them, is already come.

But say some in their Defence, How does it appear that the Bishop's Sermon, which is pointed at the Invasions of Christ's Kingdom, affects the Clergy; it rather seems to be an Admonition to the Civil Power, who are concern'd in the Legislature and Government: Dictating to them, that Christ Jesus being the sole King and Law-giver in his Church, they should not usurp, either his Royal Supremacy, or his Right of Legislature, and this being spoken in the Royal Audience, strongly argues, or at least insinuates, that it was intended thus by the Bishop.

My Answer to this is, that I Grant the Suggestion, and think it is a most just Observation : For the greatest part of the Bishop's Sermon, and especially that part of it which the Convocation strikes at, is evidently pointed at the pretended Power of the Government, to make Religious Tests and Penal Laws to bind the Consciences of Men, and to set up a *Sub-Supremacy, which by the way is a Contradiction* in it self, over the Church of Christ, where he himself is the only King and Lord : And as this was spoken in the Royal Audience, the King and several Members of the Legislature being present, it was the most proper Place for such a Subject, and a proper Subject for such a Place; and if it had not been to be so understood, Why was it Preach'd to the King and his Lords? If it had been pointed at the Clergy, it would have been either at some Visitation, or on some more proper Occasion, where it had been suitable to the Audience.

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But what then has made the Convocation so officious in the Quarrel? and why have they entred the Lists with the Bishop, upon the Encroachments, which as his Lordship scorns, are made upon the Power and Authority of Christ? If they have made no such Encroachments or Invasions, then the Sermon, or Book, does not concern them; if they have, then it behoves them to defend themselves, if they can. in which I fear they will come but ill off; and perhaps the sence of this, is the *Grief of Heart* to them, which they speak of. *For Example,*

If they have Exercis'd any Usurp'd Authority over the Consciences of Men, if they have added any Laws of their own, or of any other human Legislature, to the Laws of Christ, if they have imposed their Interpretation upon any of Christ's Laws absolutely upon the Consciences of the People, or Exerted a Power of Rewards or Punishments to enforce things respecting the Consciences of Men and their Eternal Salvation, if

they have Exacted Conformity to their Laws by the Power of the Civil Sanctions, or imposed Terms of Communion that the Consciences of others cannot Conform to, and shut out Believing Christians who are the proper Subjects of Christ's Kingdom, in a Word, if the Clergy have Exercised any judicial Authority in Religious Affairs, which by the Constitution of the Kingdom of Christ is not Committed to them; then indeed the Coat fits them, the Sermon is to them, and let them wear it, let them take it so.

But if they pretend to be innocent, it was then the most ridiculous thing in the World to take it to themselves, and to meddle at all with it; as to the *Regal Supremacy*, which they complain is Impeach'd, it was properly the business of the *Regal Authority* to have resented it if it was so, and they had much better have let it alone than have meddled with it; seeing the Government, ever since the Revolution, when the Oath of *Supremacy* was Abrogated, have left
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it just where they found it; Discharg'd the Subjects from the Recognition of it, which they were before oblig'd to by that Oath, and left every one to believe about it as they see fit; which in a Word, is just the same thing which the Bishop himself proposes, and nothing else.

It seems to be another piece of absurdity in this *Report of the Committee*, for it is not yet arriv'd to the maturity of a Representation, *viz.* That they should assert the Bishop's Doctrine to be a subversion of all Government and Discipline in the Church, and to have a tendency to reduce the Kingdom of Christ to a state of *Anarchy* and *Confusion*, whereas others affirm, that the Bishop really confines himself to that absolute Authority and Government only which relates to Conscience and eternal Salvation, and *which his Lordship affirms* Christ has not Committed to any Human Power whatsoever; and that he meddles with no other.

Now if so, Why should these Gentlemen be so agrieved at this, and how can they say that this subverts

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all Government and Discipline in the Church, unless they would have it taken for granted, either that there is no Government Exercised in the Church but what respects the Consciences and Eternal Salvation of the People; or that there is no Government Exercised by them in the Church of Christ but what is usurp'd, and is an Invasion of the Kingship and Authority of Christ Jesus. Neither of which I suppose they will be willing we should suppose.

On the other hand, it is evident, if they have usurp'd no Authority which Christ has not committed to them, if they have assumed no Power of making Laws, or of adding to the Laws already made, or imposing their interpretation of Christ's Laws upon the Consciences of the People, in a manner as Christ has not empower'd them to do, then they are no way concern'd in what the Bishop has said, nor had they any occasion to have any *Grief of Heart* about it.

But alas! it is to be feared this is not their Case; for they have imposed Religious Yokes and Chains upon
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the People, which Christ never im-
 power'd them to impose ; they have
 Erected Religious Judicatories which
 Christ never gave them Commission
 to Erect ; and Clothed themselves
 with Authorities which they have no
 Patent from him for ; and if the Le-
 gallity of these Things is overthrown,
 if they are expos'd to the World for
 them, and they are in Danger of be-
 ing oblig'd to strip, and divest them-
 selves of those Emolluments and Im-
 munities, no wonder this is a *Grief*
of Heart to them.

To descend to the particular Case,
 which it is evident the Bishop points
 at, *viz.* the Persecuting Laws which
 are in Force at this Time against our
 Brethren who seporate from us, and
 are called in general, *Dissenters* : How-
 ever those People may be Deceiv'd
 and Mistaken, yet it is evident by
 the Bishop's Doctrine, That the
 Scripture does not Direct us to believe
 that Jesus Christ, whose Kingdom is
his Church, and whose Rewards and
 Punishments are *not of this World*,
 has given any Authority either to the
 Ecclesiastick or Civil Judicature, to
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take Cognisance of their said Mistakes, *as they are acts of Conscience*, or to make any Laws to direct Rewards, or inflict Punishments, to force their said Consciences, or any way to Persecute them on their meerly Conscientious Difference, however we may believe them to be Mistakes.

And this indeed seems to be the Sum of the Question: If it is the Opinion of the Convocation, or of any other of their Divines, That unless this persecuting Power is preserv'd to them, there is then no Authority at all left in the Church, the Scandal is to themselves; for all the Christians that I have Convers'd with on this Head think otherwise, and think that what the Bishop has advanc'd may be all True, and yet the Church have left to Her all the Authority that our Blessed Saviour, who is Her King and Sovereign, thought proper and sufficient to place there: And this I shall farther Evince as Occasion offers.

F I N I S.

